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# BS 650 Studies in the Septuagint

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ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
New Testament Department

BS 650 Studies in the Septuagint 3 hours credit

Joseph R. Dongell, Instructor

Spring, 2007

BC 337

Prerequisites; Comprehensive Greek. Class limit: 25

Office Hours: Tues., Wed., Thurs.: 1:30-2:30

**I. General Description:** “For persons concerned with New Testament exegesis at an advanced level as well as those interested in the development of Second Temple and Diaspora Judaism, a working knowledge of the Septuagint (LXX) and its Greek is vital. This course provides an introduction to the LXX as well as disciplined opportunity for working with the Greek of the LXX. Texts to be read are chosen by the instructor each time the course is offered.” (ATS catalog, p. 76)

**II. Course Objectives:**

By carefully preparing for each assigned reading passage [both from the LXX and from Jobes & Silva] and engaging with the professor and his/her peers in each class setting, the student will then be able, both accurately and cogently, to:

- A. Discuss and Explain various issues related to the study of the LXX, including:
  - 1. various theories of the origins of the LXX;
  - 2. various theories of the textual transmission, recension, or new translation;
  - 3. early Christian usage of the LXX and the question of Christian canonical content;
  - 4. the use of the LXX in textual criticism of the Old Testament;
  - 5. the nature of NT writers’ usage of the MT/LXX
- B. Demonstrate an understanding of the language of the LXX by:
  - A. supplying a smooth and accurate English translation for any assigned passage;
  - B. identifying (parse or locate) any word within the assigned passages;
  - C. explaining both normal and noteworthy grammatical features in any of the passages;
  - D. explaining how various grammatical phenomena within the assigned passages are implicated in the process of theological interpretation;
  - E. identifying peculiar stylistic or grammatical features of the LXX vis-a-vis Koine Greek;
  - F. identifying stylistic or grammatical features of the LXX according to semitic influence.

**III. Course Texts:**

- Conybeare, F. C. and St. George Stock. *Grammar of Septuagint Greek: With Selected Readings, Vocabularies, and Updated Indexes*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988.
- Jobes, Karen H. and Moises Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.
- Lust, J. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992-6.
- May, Herbert and Bruce Metzger, eds. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*. Revised Standard Version. New York: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- Rahlfs, Alfred. *Septuaginta*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1935.
- Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Beyond the Basics: an Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

**IV. Requirements:**

- A. **In-Class Performance:** Students will prepare for class sessions by performing translation and grammatical analysis of the assigned LXX passages, as well studying the assigned chapters in Jobes & Silva. In the class sessions, students will be expected to offer smooth

translation of assigned LXX passages, supplemented with comments upon significant matters of morphology and grammar. These should be offered (orally, when called upon) largely without recourse to written notes. Student should also be able to discuss meaningfully the content and significance of the Jobes & Silva passage assigned that week.

- B. Periodic Tests:** Students will receive three take home tests throughout the semester, at roughly the one-third mark, the two-thirds mark, and the close of the semester. These tests will address any matters addressed in class regarding the passages we have studied together, along with all matters addressed in the assigned portion of Jobes & Silva.

## **V. Grading Plan:**

- Each student will, by the end of the semester, have accumulated 5 (five) grades:
  - 3 test scores
  - 2 classroom performance scores (one given mid-way through the semester, and one given at the close) based on the professor's records of classroom performance.
- These 5 (Five) grades will then be numerically averaged.
- The resulting average will be converted into a letter grade according to the scale provided below for reporting a final course grade to the registrar:  
A:100-95; A-:94-90; B+:89-86; B:85-83; B-:82-80; C+:79-77; C:76-74; C-:73-71;  
D+:70-67; D:66-64; D-:63-60; F:59-0

## **VI. Class Calendar and Assignment Listing:**

- |               |                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| •Due Feb. 8   | J & S Chapter 1                                           | <b>LXX translation: <u>Creation Medley</u></b> Gen. 1:1-8; Gen. 1:26-28; Ps. 18:1-7 [English 19:1-6]; Jer. 4:23-28; Isaiah 45:23-28<br>“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: I Esdras                                                                  |
| •Due Feb. 15  | J & S Chapter 2                                           | <b>LXX translation: <u>Patriarchal Pastiche</u></b> Gen. 15:1-6; Gen. 18:9-21; Gen. 22:9-19<br>“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: II Esdras                                                                                                         |
| •Due Feb. 22  | J & S Chapter 3                                           | <b>LXX translation: <u>Exodus Excursions</u></b> Exodus 3:10-15; Exodus 20:1-17; Leviticus 19:11-18<br>“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: Tobit and Judith                                                                                          |
| •Due March 1  | J & S Chapter 4                                           | <b>LXX translation: <u>Deuteronomic Days</u></b> Deut. 10:12-22; 18:15-22; 32:15-21<br>“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: Additions to Esther; Wisdom of Solomon                                                                                    |
| •Due March 8  | J & S Chapter 5                                           | <b>LXX translation: <u>Regal Readings</u></b> II Reg. 7:5-16; III Reg. 17:17-24; III Reg. 22:13-23<br>“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: Sirach 1-26                                                                                                |
| •Due March 15 | J & S Chapter 6                                           | <b>LXX translation: <u>Psalmic P(s)assages</u></b> Ps. 2:1-12; 21:1-9; 17-19 [English 22:1-8; 16-18]; 109:1-7 [English 110:1-7]<br>“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: Sirach 27-51                                                                  |
| •March 22     | [Nothing due and no class session: Professor out of town] |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| •March 29     | J & S Chapter 7                                           | <b>LXX translation: <u>Walking in Wisdom I</u></b> Proverbs 8:18-31; Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 29:8-13<br>“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: Baruch; Letter of Jeremiah; Song of the Three Young Men; Susanna; Bel and the Dragon; Prayer Of Manasseh |
| •April 5      | [Nothing due and no class session: Spring reading week]   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

- Due April 12      J & S Chapter 8      **LXX translation: Walking in Wisdom II** Wisdom of Solomon 14:16-31  
“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: I Maccabees 1-8
- Due April 19      J & S Chapter 9      **LXX translation: Isaianic Issues** Isaiah 6:6-10; 7:10-17; 40:1-8; 53:1-6, 10-12  
“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: I Maccabees 9-16

- Due April 26      J & S Chapter 10      **LXX translation: Sights of Seers** Jeremiah 38[31 in English]:31-34; 39[32 in English]:16-20; 40 [33 in English]:1-9; Ezekiel 1:26-28  
“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: II Maccabees 1-8
- Due May 3      J & S Chapter 11      **LXX translation: Majoring in the Minors** Micah 4:6-10; Joel 2:1-11; Habakkuk 2:1-5; Malachi 3:1-6  
“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: II Maccabees 9-15
- Due May 10      J & S Chapter 12      **LXX translation: Apoclayptic Apertures** Daniel 7:1-12; Zechariah 9:1-10  
“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: III Maccabees
- Due Exam Period: J & S Chapter 13-14**LXX translation: [Student choices: about 5 verses]**  
“OT Apocrypha” Reading [in English translation]: IV Maccabees; Psalm 151

## **VII. Select Bibliography:**

Students will be introduced to the value and use of the following tools as scholarly resources related in various ways to the study of the Septuagint:

- Campenhausen, Hans von. *The Formation of the Christian Bible*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972.
- Ellis, E. Earle. *The Old Testament in Early Christianity: Canon and Interpretation in Modern Research*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992.
- Ellis, E. Early. *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957.
- Hatch, Edwin, and Henry A. Redpath. *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the other Greek Versions of the Old Testament*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1897-1906.
- Hengel, Martin. *The Septuagint and Christian Scriptures in Prehistory and the Problem of Its Canon*. Old Testament Studies. Edinburgh: T & t Clark, 2001.
- Jellicoe, Sidney. *The Septuagint and Modern Study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968.
- Lust, J. and E. Eynikel and K. Hauspie. Eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992.
- Mueller, Morgens. *The First Bible of the Church: A Plea for the Septuagint*. Copenhagen International Seminar 1; Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 206. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- Orlinsky, Harry M. ed. *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Rescensions, and Interpretations: Selected Essays with a Prolegomena by Sidney Jellicoe*. New York: Ktav, 1974.
- Swete, Henry Barclay. *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*. Revised by R. R. Ottley. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914.
- Taylor, Bernard A. *The Analytical Lexicon to the Septuagint: A Complete Parsing Guide*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Thackery, H. St. J. *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek: According to the Septuagint*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909.
- Wurthwein, E. *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.